



**Columbiana County SO**  
**Brian S. McLaughlin Sheriff**

Columbiana County SO  
Brian S. McLaughlin Sheriff  
105 S Market St  
Lisbon, OH 44432  
Phone: (330)424-9519  
Fax:

**Investigative Report**      Incident #: 202300501      Report Date: **Wednesday, February 8, 2023**

**Incident Information**

<b>Call Type:</b>	<b>ASSIST OTHER UNIT</b>	<b>Call ID:</b>	<b>23-03878</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>EAST PALESTINE PD 75 E MAIN ST</b>	<b>EAST PALESTINE</b>	<b>Zone: E PALE</b>
<b>Occurred Between:</b>	<b>02/08/2023 15:45:00 And 02/08/2023 15:45:00</b>		
<b>Supervisor:</b>	<b>OH-1 Brian McLaughlin</b>	<b>Unit on Scene:</b>	
<b>Officer Report:</b>	<b>OH-2 Jenn Tucker</b>	<b>Officer Assigned:</b>	<b>OH-2 Jenn Tucker</b>
<b>Boards: D, C or J:</b>		<b>Copies To:</b>	
<b>Approved By:</b>		<b>Approved Date:</b>	
<b>Clearance Code:</b>	<b>-</b>		

**Dispatch Times**

<b>Received:</b>	<b>15:45</b>	<b>Dispatched:</b>	<b>15:46</b>	<b>Arrived:</b>	<b>15:46</b>	<b>Cleared:</b>	<b>21:03</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>5:17</b>
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**Incident Names**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>LAMBERT-MCMICHAEL, EVAN DA</b>	<b>DOB:</b>	<b>12/31/1988</b>
<b>Entry Type</b>	<b>Address:</b>	<b>WASHINGTON, DC 20009</b>	<b>Phone1:</b>
<b>SUB</b>	<b>Sex: M Race: U Hgt: 6 1 Wgt: 220 Hair: BLK Eyes: HAZ</b>	<b>Phone2:</b>	

**Narrative Report**

(2/8/2023 15:46:03 By: jswords) OH33 37 New Waterford Community Center  
(2/8/2023 16:25:00 By: jswords) OH32 37 New Waterford Community Center  
(2/8/2023 17:18:00 By: jswords) OH2 need marked unit at the EP Elementary School have 1-21 // OH32 advised  
(2/8/2023 17:20:00 By: jswords) OH2 advised will meet marked unit at E Palestine PD // OH32 advised  
(2/8/2023 17:22:46 By: jswords) OH2 37 at the PD  
(2/8/2023 17:25:35 By: jswords) 15 ck 213238030 // NIF  
(2/8/2023 17:32:00 By: jswords) OH32 and OH33 37 with OH2  
(2/8/2023 17:39:11 By: jswords) OH2 33, OH32 and OH33 have the 21  
(2/8/2023 17:40:39 By: jswords) OH33 enroute to the jail with 1-21  
(2/8/2023 18:04:09 By: jswords) OH33 37 jail  
(2/8/2023 18:17:56 By: leslie) OH37-33 FROM THE JAIL BACK ENR TO EAST PALESTINE  
(2/8/2023 18:30:00 By: jswords) OH2 advised any calls from media ref news reporter arrest they are to be referred to E Palestine PD, we were assisting them  
(2/8/2023 19:40:00 By: jswords) out to OH2 to advise news stations showing up at the jail  
(2/8/2023 20:33:27 By: leslie) AG DAVID YOST REQ A CALL IMMEDIATLEY FROM OUR PROSECUTOR...SH ELLEY PRATT ADVISED AND WILL BE MAKING CONTACT OUR PROSECUTOR  
(2/8/2023 20:35:00 By: jswords) out to OH2 and advised attorney general is calling for our prosecutor to call him immediately





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**Investigative Report**

Incident #: 202300501

Report Date: **Wednesday, February 8, 2023**

Reporting Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Entered By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





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**Investigative Report Supplement**

Date: 02/28/2023

Reporting Officer:

INC#: 202300501

CFS#: 23-03878

**Supplement Title:**

February 8, 2023 Governor DeWine was giving a press conference on the train derailment in East Palestine. A reporter, later learned to be Evan Lambert-McMichael was in the back doing a live broadcast. While reporting Evan was speaking very loudly and causing a disruption in the conference. Major General John Harris of the National Guard, a couple other members of the national guard Captain Hendrix and a female Sgt. of the Ohio State Highway patrol went over to McMichael. I could not hear what was being said but I could see hand motions that would indicate they were telling him to stop. After McMichael stopped filming it appeared that Major General Harris and McMichael got into a heated disagreement and were face to face. I still could not hear what was being said from where I was standing. At this point Major General Harris raised his hands near McMichael's chest. A female National Guard unit pulled Harris away from the argument. At this point myself, Sheriff McLaughlin, East Palestine Police Detective Haueter walked over to assist. McMichael was asked to step into the hallway because he was causing a disturbance. McMichael was told multiple times to leave the building but refused. McMichael was actively becoming more disruptive and aggressive. A School Official for East Palestine asked us to remove McMichael from the property. The press conference was being broadcasted on private property and was not open to the public. McMichael attempted to side step around Sheriff McLaughlin. McMichael once again refused to leave and Detective Haueter placed him under arrest for criminal trespass. When officers were attempting to handcuff McMichael, he began to resist and pull away from officers. McMichael was placed on the ground with a control take down to gain control of him and prevent injuries. McMichael was handcuffed and escorted to my patrol unit, due to it being the closest marked unit. I transported McMichael to East Palestine Police Department. East Palestine filed charges of Criminal Trespass and resisting arrest.

Reporting Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Entered By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



### Summary of Incident:

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a press conference was scheduled with Governor Mike DeWine, along with the EPA, Columbiana County EMA, subject matter experts, and emergency personnel at the East Palestine Elementary School to announce updates on the train derailment/fire that occurred in East Palestine on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. A state of emergency had been enacted by the Mayor of East Palestine, Trent Conway, and the reason for the press conference was to advise residents that they could return to their homes after they had been evacuated days prior. Specific information in relation to safety precautions to residents, direction of lane travels, and routes that would be available as they returned to their dwellings was to be announced as were times they could return.

At the press conference as Governor DeWine started speaking at the south end of the gymnasium, Evan Lambert, a correspondent for News Nation started reporting live from the north side of the gymnasium. Lambert was positioned with his back to the press conference and his videographer was facing him. Lambert's live reporting was loud, and individuals near the press conference could be seen turning their heads back towards Lambert as reporting officer himself had a hard time hearing the Governor with Lambert reporting. State Highway Patrol Sgt. Bridgette Matt, who is also a public information officer, started walking back towards Lambert, and stopped at one point on her walk, and turned back towards the door at the gym entrance where DeWine was speaking. Located near the doorway was Adjunct Major General John Harris of the Ohio National Guard. When Sgt. Matt turned around, Gen. Harris then started towards her, followed seconds later by an unknown state trooper who was in the gymnasium already. Both troopers were then joined by Major Hendrix from the Ohio State Highway Patrol who entered from the hallway and came through the door where Gen. Harris had been standing. Matt and Harris have no communication prior to Matt going back as captured on surveillance footage, and Matt does not appear to use her label mic to make radio communication. Matt is not wearing a comms earpiece.

Sgt. Matt is seen going directly back to the videographer and motioning with her hand towards the press conference to the videographer, and giving the videographer the "cut" sign, with her right hand going across her throat in a slashing motion.

Major General Harris then makes his way back to the reporter and engages in conversation with him. Major Hendrix and the unknown trooper arrive back in the area of Lambert, however, do not appear to engage in direct conversation with Lambert or the videographer. Sgt. Matt is observed standing behind the videographer facing Lambert and gives him the "cut" sign this time as well with her hand slashing across her throat. The situation then escalates into a heated verbal altercation between Major General Harris and the videographer, and then between Major General Harris and Lambert. Both Major General Harris and Lambert were pointing fingers at each other in close proximity to one another, and Major General Harris ends up pushing Lambert in the chest area. The situation was loud, and surveillance camera footage obtained by reporting officer from the gymnasium, along with reporting officers own visual observations depict a large number of persons at the press conference area turning their heads and watching what was transpiring.

Local Law Enforcement, along with Public Safety Director Andy Wilson observed the situation turn into a heated verbal argument that had now turned into a physical confrontation, and only at that time did Public Safety Director Andy Wilson followed by local law enforcement proceed to the area of the gymnasium where the situation has escalated to break up the disturbance. Sgt. Matt and an unknown



female National Guard member separated Major General Harris from Lambert, and Public Safety Director Andy Wilson, reporting officer, Chief Deputy Jen Tucker and Sheriff Brian McLaughlin both from the Columbiana County Sheriff's Office then attempted to get Lambert out of the gymnasium for security and safety purposes to separate both parties first and foremost, and secondly Lambert had seemingly defied whatever direct order or request given to him by the Major General Harris, and Sgt. Matt. As these individuals are tasked with the Governor's security, it was assumed at the time by local law enforcement that there was an issue with Lambert and the videographer, and these officers were attempting to deal with it and received resistance and the situation escalated.

The unknown state trooper was also with reporting officer and the listed Sheriff's Office deputies, in addition to Lt. Caleb Wycoff from the CCSO. Lambert was asked to leave the gymnasium multiple times by the Sheriff, reporting officer, the trooper, and Chief Deputy Jen Tucker. Public Safety Director Andy Wilson also asked him to step into the hall when he initially arrived back in the area. Lambert refused and was subsequently arrested. The investigative report follows.

#### **Investigative Report:**

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, reporting officer along with Lt. Caleb Wycoff, Chief Deputy Jen Tucker, and Sheriff Brian McLaughlin entered the elementary school gymnasium to observe the press conference set up as so Governor Mike DeWine and subject matter experts along with local EMA officials could brief the media on the re-opening and re-homing plan for the residents of East Palestine. A train derailment, a subsequent fire, and a controlled "blow" of hazardous chemicals had caused an evacuation of residents one mile into Ohio from the crash site and 16 miles into Pennsylvania. Roads were closed and people were forced from their homes. Additionally, the disaster had gained national attention and on Sunday February 5<sup>th</sup> Governor DeWine had ordered the National Guard to respond and a command center was set up inside the elementary school where State Highway Patrol Command Staff, public information officers, National Guard command staff, law enforcement command staff including the above mentioned officers, and county and village officials. Mayor Trent Conway had declared a state of emergency for the Village, and the order was still in effect. The press conference was the first step in advising the public that order would be lifted and the precautions they needed to follow.

The press conference was staged on the south end of the gymnasium by the stage. Upon entering the gymnasium, reporting officer, McLaughlin, Tucker and Wycoff stood a few yards behind the news media that was located in front of the podium. At one point all parties moved closer to the crowd near the podium.



**Haueter-Tucker-Wycoff position upon entering 5:14:11 PM**



**Haueter-Tucker-Wycoff upon after moving closer. 5:14:29 PM**

Reporting officer states that located in the rear of the gymnasium, in the northeast corner was a male later identified as Evan Lambert, and his videographer. A reporter and a camera person were also in the northwest corner of the gymnasium, however they stopped their activities when the Governor was about to speak.

As the press conference started and Governor DeWine was speaking, Lambert was reporting and or broadcasting live from his position in the gym. Reporting officer states that Lambert had his back to the press conference and was facing his videographer who would have been facing the conference with the camera directed at Lambert. Lambert was attired in a grey T-shirt and the videographer in a blue jacket. Reporting officer reasonably assumed at that time that Lambert was reporting as he was in front of the camera speaking and the camera person was situated behind the camera.

Reporting officer states that several individuals were observed turning their heads back towards the direction of Lambert, as his speaking at the same time as Governor DeWine was making it difficult to hear the Governor and the message he was delivering. This was also confirmed via school surveillance footage obtained by reporting officer on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Reporting officer also found it difficult to hear and made a comment to Lt. Wycoff at the time that it was difficult to hear the Governor. In fact, to reporting officers recollection that is why Lt. Wycoff, Tucker and reporting officer moved closer.



**Individuals looking back at Lambert during press conference 5:14:38**



Reporting officer states that Sgt. Matt from the OSP, and who reporter officer observed in the Command Center during the week started walking back towards Lambert. Although at the time reporting officer was not aware where Sgt. Matt was located, surveillance footage indicates that she as standing off to the right of where we were positioned. Reporting officer states that Sgt. Matt, was then observed in the rear of the gymnasium standing behind the videographer, with Major General Harris near Lambert, and Major Hendrix from the OSP nearby along with an unknown trooper in tactical gear. At this point reporting officer started to consistently watch what was transpiring, as reporting officer could see erratic arm motions at times consistent with a dispute. Reporting officer did observe Sgt. Matt standing behind the videographer as so Lambert could see her giving Lambert the "cut" sign, making a slashing motion across her throat.

Reporting officer states that the encounter then soon appeared to turn heated, and loud voices could be heard coming from the area. The videographer could be seen making pointing motions as could Lambert and General Harris. The involved trio at times could be seen pointing at each other in an aggressive manner, and reporting officer at one point observed Lambert step towards Harris. The troopers momentarily blocked reporting officer's view, and reporting officer then recollects Harris pushing Lambert once reporting officers view was unblocked. Reporting officers verbal account to fellow officers and Columbiana County Prosecutors following the incident was the aforementioned account. That at one point Lambert stepped towards the General during the argument, and then Harris pushed Lambert. Reporting officer advised that reporting officer did not see Lambert touch the general or even chest bump him, but at one point got close and the next thing in the events was the general pushing Lambert. Reporting officer recounted that I could not be certain from my point of view if Lambert came in contact with General Harris, but that there was a heated argument and that Lambert was not complying with what Sgt. Matt and General Harris had requested of them.

Once the situation started turning physical, reporting officer , Wycoff, Tucker and Sheriff McLaughlin left where we were standing and made our way towards the area to respond to the situation. No conversation occurred between any of the responding officers, and all officers instinctively apparently felt the situation required intervention. Obviously, the press conference was extremely important, the Governor of the State of Ohio was present, and Lambert and his videographer was obviously giving Ohio State Patrol Officers and the Adjunct General Harris, and appointed cabinet member of the Governor an issue with their directions prior to General Harris pushing Lambert.



Reporting officer observed a female National Guard member and Sgt. Matt separate Harris and attempt to move him away from Lambert. The first to arrive to Lambert was Andy Wilson, who reporting officer believed was Wycoff at the time however upon watching surveillance camera footage realized was Wilson. Tucker arrived right before reporting officer, and the Sheriff and Wycoff were right behind reporting officer. The unnamed trooper who had his body camera activated was also present.

Wilson advised Lambert to step out into the hall (reporting officer initially believed it was Wycoff standing there). Body camera footage from the trooper's body camera indicates Wilson also identified himself as the director of public safety. At one point while Wilson is still present Wilson, reporting officer and Tucker all have their arms extended pointing out into the hall directing Lambert to the hall. The General was already separated and removed from the scene, and responding officers now were attempting to remove Lambert from the scene of the Gymnasium. Again, a verbal argument had taken place which was loud, heated and animated. The argument turned physical and at that time to reporting officer it was not known if the General's push of Lambert was in response to something Lambert did or was initiated by Harris. What was known at the time was that Sgt. Matt had advised them to cut their reporting. This was clear based on her "cut" signs. It was known that two OSP troopers and Harris also responded with Matt, and Harris was advising the crew something that obviously they became upset with and were not complying with. Reporting officer was able to make out the camera person telling "one more minute" to Harris, consistent with a feed being shut down. Reporting officer assumed it was because of the noise interfering with DeWine, but the lack of any visible press credentials or identifying material also caused reporting officer to wonder when they (Harris and Matt) first approached Lambert if they were not authorized to be back there for lack of permission, being authentic press, or both reasons. This was not the concern for reporting officer and responding deputies however, as we were only responding to what had become a loud argument that turned into a physical confrontation and that Lambert and his videographer had verbally started arguing with the General and the troopers upon being advised whatever both Matt and Harris had advised them during a state of emergency press conference.

Reporting officer recalls Deputy Tucker advising Lambert to "go now", after Wilson had advised Lambert to step out to the hall. Tucker touched Lambert as if to direct him out and Lambert pulled back, advising Tucker to not touch him. Sheriff McLaughlin advised Lambert to "go now, or you can go to jail". Wilson then left the group based on camera footage, and reporting officer asked Lambert "lets go outside". Reporting officer recalls the state trooper asking Lambert on a couple occasions to go outside and talk, and reporting officer also asked Lambert on at least one other occasion to "lets go outside". Sheriff McLaughlin on numerous occasions told Lambert to leave the gymnasium or he would be arrested. Lambert advised that he was not leaving, and that he was going to stay and listen. Lambert at one point attempted to walk to his left, and was blocked by McLaughlin. Chief Deputy Tucker also asked Lambert to leave the gymnasium. The directions were not conflicting or confusing as in some occasions where multiple officers are giving commands, i.e. hands up, shut of the vehicle, exit the vehicle, etc. All verbal directions were to exit the gymnasium and there was an abundance of them. Lambert was not compliant with anything he was requested to do to have him exit the gymnasium. Reporting officers rational alone not-withstanding other responding officers for having Lambert exit the gymnasium was simple. A verbal altercation had just occurred during an emergency press conference that had resulted in a physical confrontation with Lambert being one of the parties. It was clear that Lambert was not complying with whatever directives he had been asked by the command staff consisting of Harris and



Sgt. Matt, and leaving Lambert inside the gymnasium would not have been the prudent move at that time based on what had just occurred especially since the responding officers did not know the full details on why Lambert was asked to cut his live reporting. Policing at its basic is to separate both parties and remove them from the situation and the crowd. Lambert was advising that he was just doing his job and that he was covered under the 1<sup>st</sup> amendment however that was not the reason local law enforcement was there with him. The major general had been secured by the above mentioned individuals and reporting officer and other responding officers were simply trying to get Lambert to go outside as well. Major Hendrix's was with the videographer and was successful in getting him outside the gym, and Lambert was all that was left of the parties involved. During the conversation with Lambert, Chief Deputy Tucker stated that we were just going to have to arrest him (Lambert), and reporting officer also advised something similar. Reporting officer stated this as a way hopefully to get Lambert to leave without incident, however this was to no avail. Lambert was simply pointing and stating that he was not going to leave.

East Palestine School Building and Maintenance Supervisor Mark McTrusty then walked back to where we were, identified himself, and advised that he did not want Lambert there. Sheriff McLaughlin advised Lambert "there ya have it, your gonna stand outside or go to jail". Lambert still was not moving and was speaking to McLaughlin and at that point reporting officer felt the situation would not resolve itself without physically escorting Lambert from the building. The emergency press conference was still being disrupted by the commotion, Lambert had refused any and all verbal directives to leave on his own and those attempts were futile. Reporting officer took Lambert's left arm with my right hand and starting to physically direct/guide him out of the gym, pointing to the area we were going with my opposite hand. This was the last attempt to gain compliance before Lambert was arrested. Lambert advised "don't touch him", and reporting officer had to then use a second hand, transitioning to more of a soft escort position. Deputy Tucker then took Lambert's other arm, and he was escorted out to the foyer area. Lambert again advised don't touch him, and while being walked to the doors reporting officer could feel Lambert try and pull his arm away and was advised that he was under arrest. Reporting officer then went to move his arm behind his back for more of a control position, moving away from a simple basic not controlled escort position.

Reporting officer felt Lambert start to turn to what was his left and Lambert was now facing the gymnasium having turned himself around. Reporting officer reach around Lambert and took hold of the front of his shirt with my left hand while still maintaining his right wrist in attempts to regain control. Chief Deputy Tucker then assisted in taking Lambert to the ground in order to gain control and handcuff Lambert. Lambert ended up in a somewhat seated position, and was given commands by Tucker to stop resisting. Lambert was not actively aggressive however not complying. Lambert eventually complied and moved to his stomach, and Lt. Wycoff also advised Lambert to place his hands behind his back.

A female with a cell phone was then filing as were multiple cameras in the foyer. Lambert advised something to the extent of this is what it's like to be a black reporter in 2023.

Lambert was handcuffed with Tucker's cuffs, and was immediately turned on his side in a recovery position and quickly checked for any weapons and brought to his feet. Reporting officer noticed that the cuff reporting officer applied was tight, and I advised Lambert that it was tight and we would loosen it for him to make it more comfortable.



Once outside Lambert was walked to Tucker's marked unit. Cameras were following reporting officer, Lambert and Tucker the entire way, and at one point Lambert was asked a question by reporters and stopped walking to answer. Lambert was allowed to speak to the reporters, and then we continued on to the cruiser.

Lambert was safely secured in the marked unit and transported to East Palestine PD by Tucker.

Reporting officer contacted EPPD officers and requested that they obtain statements from Sgt. Matt and Major General Harris and reporting officer went to EPPD to assist Chief Deputy Tucker.

#### **Statement of Sgt. Matt**

Lt. Don Johnson from the East Palestine PD went to the command center and spoke to Sgt. Matt from the Ohio State Highway Patrol. The encounter was recorded on body camera, which was being worn by Ptl. Anthony Monteleone who was also present.

Matt advised that she had went back and advised the reporter and videographer to "keep it down" as it was loud during a live press conference. Matt used her hands to show and up and down motion, not the slicing "cut motion" which was observed once by reporting officer, and found to be on two separate occasions when reviewing school camera footage. Matt advised that Lambert and Harris got into a verbal altercation and that there was pushing and shoving between the two of them, but she did not see who pushed who first, despite subsequent obtained camera footage that indicates Matt was right next to the general when he pushed Lambert. Matt states that she then put her hands on the general and assisted in extracting him from the scene.

#### **Interview of Major General Harris**

Ptl. Anthony Monteleone spoke to Major General Harris, and requested he provide a written statement. Ptl. Elkin was also present. Harris was provided an East Palestine PD statement form. According to Monteleone, Harris wrote one sentence, briefly describing where he was at the beginning. Harris verbally advised officers that Lambert was coming at him and he put his hands up pushing him to keep him from coming in contact with him. Harris requested to speak to Public Safety Director Andy Wilson for guidance. According to the officers, the General was then summoned way as Governor DeWine requested to speak to him. Harris left the statement form, advising he would be back to finish it, however never returned.

Reporting officer states that while Lt. Johnson was interviewing Sgt. Matt with Monteleone present, Andy Wilson appeared, and stated that they were getting ready to get on the plane and asked if Harris could finish the statement and they would get it to EPPD. Wilson asked for the statement form Harris started, and took it with him. The statement was never returned to East Palestine PD.

#### **Released Statement of General Harris to Media**

Although the investigating agency never received a statement from Harris, one was released to the news media and is attached in an article with this case. Harris advised that he heard the loud broadcast from Lambert, and because of the critical information being disseminated felt he was the one best suited to approach the reporter. Harris also advised that Lambert lurched at him, and he instinctively put his hands up fearing imminent harm. Reporting officer is aware through surveillance footage that



Harris is standing in the rear of the Gym, and does not move until Sgt. Matt starts back towards Lambert, stops, turns, and only then does Harris move.

**Sgt. Matt starts to move towards Evan Lambert 5:14:41 PM**



**Sgt. Matt moves towards Lambert and looks back towards door where Harris is standing 5:14:46Pm.**



**General Harris starts to move towards rear of gymnasium.**





**Sgt. Matt Meets with Major Henrixs and unknown OSP trooper**



**Sgt. Matt "cut" sign.**

**General Harris 1<sup>st</sup> contact with Lambert**





**Andy Wilson- Tucker-Haueter pointing for Lambert to leave the gymnasium.**



#### **Transport of Lambert:**

After leaving to school, reporting officer went to the East Palestine PD, where Lt. Johnson, Tucker, and two sheriffs deputies who were transporting were in the parking lot with Lambert. Lambert's cuffs had been taken off and he was placed in transportation shackles as per CCSO policy. Lambert was identified, as of yet his information had not been obtained. Lambert's cell phone was provided to transporting officers to give to jail staff and place in his property.

#### **Arrest: After Effects and Summary of After Effects:**

Reporting officer states that if removing the at times spun media attention that had initially aired without obtaining the full factual information, the arrest of Evan Lambert was a simple minor arrest that occurs every day in the life of not only East Palestine Police Officers but Columbiana County Sheriff's Deputies. Officers observed a heated argument that had now escalated into something physical. The Governor of the State of Ohio was present inside the area where the situation was occurring. Setting aside 30 years of law enforcement experience and if simply using a reasonable person analogy of watching situations escalate on T.V. where flocks of people start converging on one area because of an incident, and then the incident becomes chaotic, in the area where the Governor is, would have been negligent for responding officers to just simply stand there and not respond. More importantly it would have been the unethical thing to do. Nothing illustrates this more than once Lambert is taken into custody, the media covering this live press conference, one which was providing critical information to residents. Residents which the officers from the East Palestine PD and Columbiana County Sheriff's Office care about and serve every day, left this conference and flocked to the arrest as shown on school camera footage and observed in real time by reporting officer. Situations like this can and have turned



into boiling points. The safety of Ohio's Governor and the information being relayed to them was too important. The facts are very simple. Evan Lambert was approached by members of Governor DeWine's cabinet and a State Highway Patrol Public Information Officer during a live press conference during a disaster situation. Lambert and his camera person were asked to stop their reporting. If they were wrongfully told to do so, they have every right to file a complaint with the Governor or take legal action. Arguing with Sgt. Matt and the General at that time, at that place was not the resolution. The situation then escalated. Reporting officer does in no way condone Harris' actions. In fact, reporting officer would recommend charges against the General based on my investigation. But that in no way eliminates the fact prior, both Lambert and the camera person were given a directive by both Matt and Harris. Lambert was not covering the Governor; in fact his back was to the press conference. He was simply going live with a broadcast and making it difficult for persons listening to hear. Matt and Harris, obviously felt as part of the Governors team to intervene. Lambert then chose to not leave the gym after local authorities responded to break up the verbal and physical disruption. He was not arrested by local law enforcement for anything to do with the 1<sup>st</sup> amendment. Lambert was arrested because as stated before, policing at its basics it to have both involved parties leave the area, and he refused to do so. The 1<sup>st</sup> amendment does not cover arguments or physical altercations where one or both parties are involved, and it becomes a disruption.

The arrest has caused hundreds upon hundreds of calls from socialist groups and individuals from across the country calling both departments, being vulgar, tying up phone lines, and making direct threats. The burden on the East Palestine Police Department because of the way the organizations are directed to make coordinated phone and social media attacks has been burdensome to the dedicated men and women of the East Palestine PD to have to deal with. As stated at the onset, this was a routine arrest, comparable to two men involved in a bar scuffle, where one chose not to leave after the police arrived.